



**STAFF REPORT  
ACTION REQUIRED**

**116 Beech Avenue – Application to Remove a Private Tree**

<b>Date:</b>	September 22, 2016
<b>To:</b>	Toronto and East York Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Jason Doyle, Director, Urban Forestry, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
<b>Wards:</b>	Ward 32 – Toronto-Danforth
<b>Reference Number:</b>	P:\2016\Cluster A\PFR\TE19-101316-AFS#23518

**SUMMARY**

This report requests that City Council deny the application for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located at 116 Beech Avenue. The application indicates the reasons for removal is the poor condition of the tree due to root damage, a loss of growing space, and reduced water availability.

The subject tree is a red oak (*Quercus rubra*), measuring 110 cm in diameter. Urban Forestry does not support removal of the subject tree as it is maintainable and in good condition, both structurally and botanically.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation recommends that:**

1. City Council deny the request for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree located at 116 Beech Ave.

**Financial Impact**

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

**COMMENTS**

Urban Forestry received an application for a permit to remove one (1) privately-owned tree situated in the front yard of the property at 116 Beech Avenue. The subject tree is a red oak tree measuring 110 cm in diameter. The request to remove this tree has been

made to address concerns that the tree is in poor condition due to root damage caused by recent construction of the house, a loss of growing space, and reduced water availability. The arborist report that accompanied the application describes the tree to be in poor to very poor condition.

Urban Forestry staff inspected the tree and determined that it is healthy and maintainable both botanically and structurally. Despite the presence of a cavity and included bark at a branch union, Urban Forestry assessed this tree to be healthy and maintainable through pruning in accordance with good arboricultural practices.

Prior to construction of the new dwelling in 2013, a Tree Injury Permit was obtained from Urban Forestry by the previous property owner. Measures were taken during the construction of the house and neighbouring house (built as part of the same project) to minimize damage to the tree. These measures included the construction of a floating walkway and the re-construction of an existing driveway, which reduced the need for additional excavation within the tree protection zone and prevented damage to the tree.

Red oak trees are tolerant of urban conditions where limited growing space and reduced water availability are common. The red oak tree at 116 Beech Avenue is contributing to the urban canopy because of its tolerance to these conditions, and this contribution would be difficult to replace in the same location with many other species.

As required under *Section 813-19, of City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 813, Trees, Article III*, a notice of application was posted on the subject property for the minimum 14-day period in order to provide an opportunity for comment by the community. Thirty-seven (37) objections were received in response to the application to remove the tree in question.

A permit to remove the tree was denied by Urban Forestry. The owner is appealing this decision.

Should City Council approve this request for removal, in accordance with *Section 813-20, of City of Toronto Municipal Code, Chapter 813, Trees, Article III*, permit approval must be conditional upon the provision of satisfactory replacement planting. As a condition of permit issuance, the applicant is proposing to plant two (2) replacement trees. However, in this instance it would be appropriate for the applicant to provide five (5) replacement trees which can be achieved in a combination of on-site planting and cash-in-lieu of planting.

Trees improve the quality of urban life and contribute greatly to our sense of community. They are aesthetically pleasing and soften the hard lines of built form and surfaces in an urban setting. Trees contribute to the overall character and quality of neighbourhoods. Studies suggest that social benefits such as crime reduction and neighbourhood cohesion can be attributed to the presence of trees.

The environmental benefits of trees include cleansing of air, noise and wind reduction, and protection from ultraviolet radiation. Trees reduce rainwater runoff thereby reducing soil erosion and lowering storm water management costs. They also contribute to moderation of temperature extremes and reduction of the urban heat island effect by providing shade during the summer.

Trees provide many economic benefits including the enhancement of property values. Homes with mature trees have higher value when compared to similar types of homes in similar locations without trees. Mature trees are associated with reduced home energy consumption. Air conditioning costs are lower in a home shaded by trees and heating costs are reduced when trees mitigate the cooling effects of wind in winter. Trees are a community resource which can make the city more attractive to investors, tourists and prospective residents thus contributing to growth and prosperity.

It is the goal of the City of Toronto to increase the city's tree canopy to 40 per cent. The loss of trees in the city due to the ice storm experienced in late December 2013, compounded with additional recent tree loss due to presence of the Asian longhorned beetle and the emerald ash borer make the preservation of all healthy trees more necessary now than ever.

The red oak tree located at 116 Beech Avenue is a valuable part of the urban forest. With proper care and maintenance this tree has the potential to provide the property owner and the surrounding community with benefits for many more years. Urban Forestry, therefore, does not support removal of this tree.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Jason Doyle  
Director, Urban Forestry  
Parks, Forestry and Recreation

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 – Photo of the red oak tree at 116 Beech Avenue, measuring 110 cm in diameter

Attachment 2 – Photo of the red oak tree at 116 Beech Avenue, measuring 110 cm in diameter, showing the neighbouring floating walkway in the background





